

Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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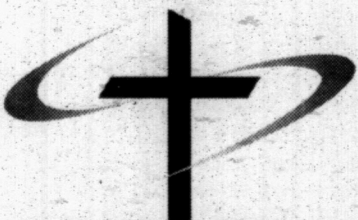
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No. 33

WHAT'S IN THE
RECORD



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Christian Resources
of the Southern Baptist Convention

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MK puts life together after mission tragedy

By Stacey Hamby
Missouri Word & Way

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. (BP) — Not a July 7 since 1971 has passed without the memory. The memory of finding his parents slain in their beds.

In the past 26 years, God has eased that 10-year-old boy's pain. David Potter now is a deacon in First Church, Springfield, Mo., and an insurance agent.

"Until you forgive, you can't truly live," Potter said. "My heart does not burn to go down there and cause someone else grief. Do I want to shake hands with the killer? No. But Jesus Christ forgives them just as much as he forgives me."

His parents, Paul and Nancy Potter of Marshfield, were Southern Baptist missionaries in Santiago, Dominican Republic, from 1966 until their deaths in 1971. They had been back on the field only a few days after a furlough when they were killed. No one ever was charged with their murders; no motive ever was established.

"Their deaths were not a tragedy because they knew they had committed their lives to the Lord," Potter said. "The real tragedy would have been if the work of God had stopped in Santiago."

The work did not stop. In fact, fruits of the Potters' early labors still can be seen today. The first church they began now runs about 50 in attendance on Sundays, and it has three missions.

"Their name is very well remembered here," said Sonia Burnett, a missionary in Santiago. She and her husband, Barry, were appointed by the International Mission Board in 1992.

Santiago Christians paid tribute to the Potters in 1996, marking 25 years since their deaths, Sonia said. A Christian music group from Miami held a concert to raise funds for construction of a church in Santiago.

Potter met the Burnetts a few years ago when they visited First Church, Springfield, while on furlough.

"The neatest thing they told me was that when they tell people they're Baptist missionaries, people say, 'Paul (or Nancy) Potter led me to the Lord.' That's a blessing to me."

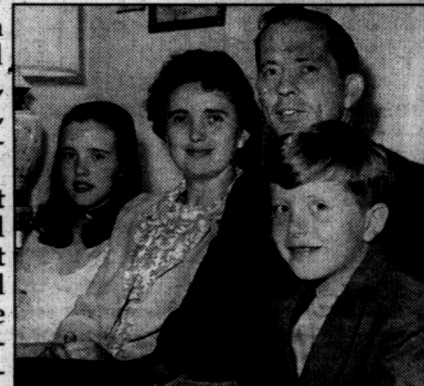
Potter has not returned to the Dominican Republic since a 1973 visit, but he would like to take his family there someday.

"I love that country. It means an awful lot to me."

Time has healed a lot of pain, Potter said. "What really helps get you through a traumatic event is to find people to truly love," he said. "I met my wife, then had kids. I created my own life." He and his wife, Misty, have been married 17 years. They have three children: Adam,



THE POTTERS — Susan, Nancy, Paul and David in happier days (left), and David's family today (above). Photo courtesy of Missouri Word and Way.



16; Tyler, 13; and Kyndal, 10.

David and Susan were raised by their mother's parents, Dave and Helen Roper of Marshfield. Their father's parents, Roy and Lila Potter, also lived in Marshfield. Only Helen Roper still is living. She lives in a retirement home, and she and David visit regularly.

Susan now lives in Maryland with her husband, Ed Richardson, and their three children. They are active in a Presbyterian church. In the early 1980s, Susan and Ed served three years with Wycliffe Bible Translators in Papua New Guinea.

Seven years ago, Potter's friend and fellow member of First Church in Springfield, Jack Thurman, invited him along on

a mission trip to Brazil.

"I got a passion again for missions," Potter said. "I had been verbal in my support of missions, but I enjoyed the trip so much that I made missions a part of my life again."

Since 1990, Potter has participated in six mission trips to Brazil through Christian Missions Unlimited (CMU). CMU builds Southern Baptist churches in the Amazon region of Brazil. He is planning to go again in November. His older son, Adam, has accompanied him on one of those trips. He plans to take his younger son, Tyler, this year and his daughter, Kyndal, when she gets older.

"My family's lives have been radically changed by the trips to Brazil," Potter said. "We all have a heart for missions."

His parents would be proud.

Baptist Book Stores best sellers

MUSIC

1. Much Afraid, Jars of Clay (Brentwood)
2. Behind the Eyes, Amy Grant (Word)
3. Heavenly Place, Jaci Velasquez (Word)
4. Shades of Grace, Bob Carlisle (Provident Distribution)
5. Life, Love & Other Mysteries, Point of Grace (Word)
6. God's Property, God's Property (Word)
7. Jesus Freak, DC Talk (Chordant)
8. Caedmons Call, Caedmons Call (Warner)
9. Jars of Clay, Jars of Clay (Brentwood)
10. Stained Glass, Clay Crosse (Brentwood)

VIDEO

1. Larry Boy & the Fib from Outerspace, Veggie Tales (Word)
2. Very Veggie Sing-a-long, Veggie Tales (Word)
3. Dave and the Giant Pickle, Veggie Tales (Word)
4. Where's God When I'm Scared?, Veggie Tales (Word)
5. Rack, Shack and Bennie, Veggie Tales (Word)
6. Are You my Neighbor?, Veggie Tales (Word)
7. God Wants Me to Forgive Them?, Veggie Tales (Word)
8. Action Bible Songs, Cedarhurst Kids (Brentwood)
9. Beginner's Bible #3 - Noah's Ark, Animated (Nelson)
10. Welcome to the Freak Show, DC Talk (Chordant)

Looking back

10 years ago

Attempts by conservatives to dismiss N. Larry Baker as executive director of the Christian Life Commission fails on a 15-15 vote. Joe Atchison, director of missions for Benton Association, Rogers, Ark. makes the motion to dismiss Baker immediately.

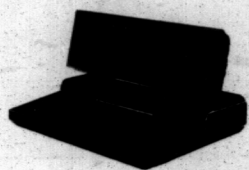
20 years ago

A new building for Lakeshore Church, Jackson, which was organized a little over a year ago, is dedicated on Sept. 18. MBCB executive director-treasurer Earl Kelly is the featured speaker. The 10 acres of property was purchased with Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering funds.

50 years ago

Most of Gulf Coast Baptist churches apparently escaped last week's hurricane without serious damage, reports Joe T. Odle, pastor of First Church, Gulfport. "The storm was terrible and the damage is great, but the Lord was with us through it all," Odle writes.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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A line drawn in the sand

Many Southern Baptists are not comfortable with the Disney boycott resolution passed by messengers to the 1997 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. More than a few Southern Baptists have expressed their intention to ignore the boycott resolution altogether.

Our denominational polity (system of governance) allows individual Southern Baptists to make their own decisions about such issues, but having the freedom to do so carries enormous responsibility. It is hoped — yea, assumed — that Southern Baptists pray intently and submit to God's guidance before they make such decisions for themselves.

However, one doesn't have to be an all-out, fire-breathing supporter of the boycott resolution to be deeply offended by the contempt with which Disney management apparently views the Christian community. To wit:

As a large number of concerned Christian and pro-family groups sat around a Washington, D.C., table on July 23, word came that Disney's vice-president of corporate affairs was pulling out of the long-scheduled meeting at the last minute — the second time he had done so.

The lower-level representative who took his place listened politely but declined to offer any specific responses to the group's concerns. Later, Disney spokesman Tom Geegan explained there "was never any understanding on our part that we were to bring" proposals to the meeting.

It is important to note that the meeting included not only Southern Baptists but the 500,000-member Concerned Women for America, Focus on the Family, Family Research Council, and King for America, a

civil rights group. Obviously, Southern Baptists are not the only ones with Disney concerns.

All these people spent a lot of time and money to fly to Washington from all across the country, and Disney stood them up. It certainly appears that the company's management was never really sincere in the first place about hearing out Southern Baptists and other concerned groups.

As if to make that point even plainer, Disney's subsidiary television network, ABC, on Sept. 18 debuted "Nothing Sacred," a sordid series built around Father Ray, a wimpy Roman Catholic priest who doesn't believe in God. An advance videotape of the show has been circulating for several weeks.

Father Ray's church staff includes an atheist, a feminist nun who prays to "our mother in heaven," and a closeted homosexual fellow priest who confides he is suffering from AIDS.

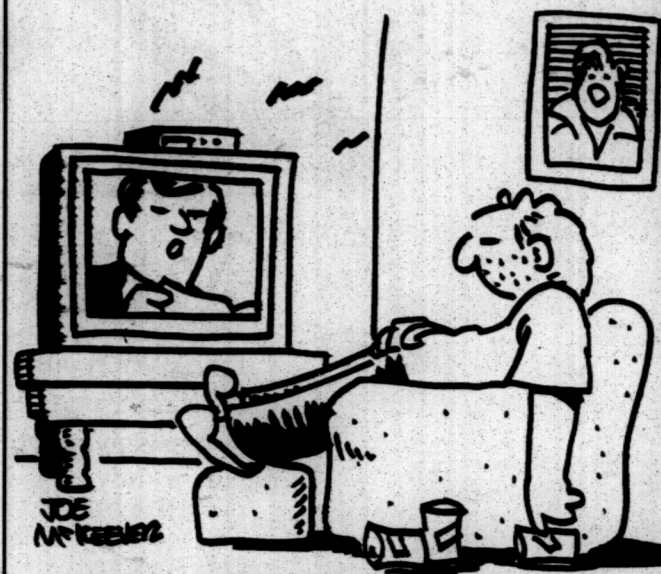
Father Ray advises a young, pregnant woman only to follow her conscience in deciding whether to get an abortion, and he has flashbacks to his own past sexual experiences. He refers to the priesthood as "a hell of a job" and declares, "I don't even know if God exists."

That's just the first episode.

For a corporation and a subsidiary that have become national cheerleaders for the image sensitivities of the homosexual community (remember the positive portrayal of Ellen's "coming out" earlier this year?), that same sensitivity apparently does not apply to the religious community.

The list of offenses and insults is almost too long to print. Disney is certainly not

"AND JESUS SAID, 'GO INTO ALL THE WORLD AND REACH THE VIEWING PUBLIC.'"



THE TELEVISION OF
HOLY SCRIPTURE

alone in the entertainment field when it comes to painting religious people in the worst possible light, but the company is inarguably an industry leader in this regard. That should be troubling to all Christians.

So here we stand, a line drawn in the sand between the nation's largest Protestant denomination and the nation's largest entertainment conglomerate.

Boycott Disney if you like. Ignore the boycott if you so choose. Just don't call it unnecessary.

GUEST OPINION:



As I remember...

*By Charlie Horner, State Student
Secretary, 1946-1956*

As I remember Mississippi ABSU more than fifty years ago, 1946-1956, is the title of this brief memoirs.

While I was in the navy stationed in Panama in 1945, I was surprised to receive a letter from Mrs. D.A. McCall, wife of the Executive Secretary of Mississippi Baptists, asking me to consider being the first State BSU Secretary for Mississippi. (The title of BSU Director came later).

Not knowing how much longer I would be required to stay in the navy, I replied that I would consider it prayerfully, but I wondered whether Mississippi Baptists would wait on my release. Surprisingly they did, so my bride, the former Eva Lois Davis of Jackson, and I moved to Jackson and I began my ten-year tenure in March of 1946.

Riley Munday served effectively as interim Secretary until I arrived and later also served effectively as local BSU Secretary at Delta State, and, I think, at Mississippi Southern, as it was known then.

I think I know at least one who suggested me to the McCalls - Chester Swor - for he had befriended me many times before. And as Mississippi Baptists generally, and Mississippi students particularly know, Chester befriended many others through many years.

The state budget for BSU was, as I remember, \$5,000. This covered my salary and travel expenses. Our department had only one other employee - a part-time secretary.

But with the prayerful help of many pastors, the State Mission Board, the few full-time and part-time BSU Secretaries, and many wonderful college students, the budget grew, the statewide BSU meetings grew, the involvement of students in local sponsoring churches grew, and the number of full-time BSU Secretaries grew.

It was a time when almost no out of town students had cars, resulting in their being involved in a church in their

college town virtually every Sunday.

It was a time when, especially Mississippi College, Blue Mountain, Woman's College (later William Carey College) and Clarke College, assured large attendance at state BSU meetings.

It was a time of volunteer BSU Secretaries - a member of the college faculty or the wife of the pastor of the sponsoring local church, or a member of the local church, who loved students - did remarkably effective BSU work.

I could name many of these helpers, but I can't remember them all and, therefore, will not name any. But I do thank God for everyone of them and for

the good work that they did. They led in securing free lodging and free meals for many of the students who attended the state BSU meetings. Few stayed in motels in those days.

The Student Department of the Sunday School Board, Dr. Frank Leavell, Dr. Kearnie Keegan, Sibyl Brame, Mary Nance Daniel, Frances Barbour, William Hall Preston, Bob Denny, James Ray Bean, Marjorie Moore, et. al. - was of tremendous help.

I am thankful for those ten years in Mississippi BSU. I am thankful to have had a part in starting Youth Night of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

I am thankful that Corrine Griffin, of Blue Mountain, was the first Mississippi BSU Summer Missionary as she joined other first summer missionaries from other states in doing mission work in Hawaii under the direction of William Hall Preston.

And I am very thankful for my dear wife, Eva Lois, and for our children, both of whom were born in Jackson during my tenure in Mississippi, for their supporting me in prayer and in innumerable other ways.

And I rejoice in the remarkable growth of Mississippi BSU, since I left, under the direction of Ralph Winders and now Jerry Merriman.



BAPTIST STUDENT UNION

Mississippi GAs help Venezuelan girl gain vision

By Carl M. White
Associate Editor

The next step in a meaningful mission project involving a child in Venezuela and hundreds of Mississippi Girls in Action, was completed Sept. 16 when Marjean Patterson, Executive Director for the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) presented a \$2,000 check to Butch

and Pam Strickland, International Mission Board missionaries to Venezuela 1988. The money will be used to pay for corrective eye surgery for the four year old daughter of a Venezuelan mission pastor.

This is offering money, Jan Cossitt, consultant, WMU, pointed out, collected from the GA campers who attended Camp Garaywa this summer. Half of the mission offering

was dedicated to flood relief ministry in North Dakota and the other half toward the surgery for Syrelis de Rivas.

The daughter of Samuel and Maigle de Rivas, pastor of the Baptist mission at El Venado, Venezuela, Syrelis was born with a severe crossed-eyed condition, according to Butch Strickland.

"Jan and some other ladies from Mississippi came to lead in WMU training at the First Baptist Church of Carora," Strickland said.

First Church Carora sponsors the mission in El Venado. Brother Rivas and his family attended the training event. While there, Cossitt met them and learned of their need.

The Rivas' also have a younger daughter, named Mygelis.

The surgery would cost over \$15,000 in the United States, but can be done by a doctor in a private hospital for around \$1,500 in Venezuela, Strickland said.

"Venezuelans are very appearance conscious," Strickland added. "Though Syrelis is very pretty, she would never be accepted by her peers because of her eyes."

The condition also prevents

her from learning to read, which means she would not be able to go to school, Strickland also pointed out.

"Without this surgery she will grow up illiterate," he said.

The Rivas' options were very limited. "He is a bio-vocational pastor," Strickland said. "They could never afford to pay for this surgery."

The Stricklands live in Maracaibo, where Butch, a native of Texas, works as a church planter. Pam, a native of Alaska, is involved in a health clinic ministry. "We have seen eight new churches started since coming to Venezuela," Strickland said.

Cossitt said there should be enough money left over after the surgery to bring Syrelis and her mother to Mississippi. She hopes to be able to announce when they will be coming in the near future.



THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE



GIFT OF VISION — Pictured at the presentation are (from the left); Jan Cossitt WMU consultant; Marjean Patterson, WMU Executive Director; Pam Strickland, Carrie Strickland, Butch Strickland, IMB Missionaries to Venezuela. (Photo by Carl M. White)

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BSSB trustees approve new agency name

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP) — In a historic vote, trustees of the Sunday School Board (BSSB) of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) have approved recommending LifeWay Christian Resources of the SBC to the denomination as the new name for the 106-year-old agency.

By a unanimous voice vote Sept. 15, trustees approved the administration recommendation during their semiannual meeting at Glorieta (N.M.) Conference Center.

Two more steps remain in the approval process — consideration in February 1998 by the SBC Executive Committee to putting the request on the agenda for the 1998 SBC and consideration by messengers attending the June 9-11 meeting in Salt Lake City. If approved by SBC messengers, the new name would become effective immediately.

"As our executive management group has lived with the proposed name, we feel it best represents who we are and what we do," President James T. Draper Jr. told Baptist Press. "We came to this name after looking at over 400 possibilities. This is not a trendy name; it will stand the test of time. It also incorporates an established name that represents quality resources in the view of churches and individuals."

Draper said the name is rooted in the Bible verse, John 14:6: "Jesus said, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"

"We already seek to lift up Christ as the only way to truth, salvation, and eternal life through everything we do," Draper said. "I believe we can point people to The Way even through our name."

"LifeWay points to the essence of our Christian faith — The Way to a full and meaningful life. 'Christian' delineates our faith and complements 'Southern Baptist' in the latter part of the name. 'Resources' encompasses both products and services and relates them to life needs. 'Of the

Southern Baptist Convention' clearly states our relationship to our denomination and the churches we serve," Draper said.

In the past five years, Draper told trustees, a new vision has been cast for the Sunday School Board. It states: "We will assist local churches and believers to evangelize the world to Christ, develop believers, and grow churches by being the best worldwide provider of relevant, high-quality, high-value Christian products and services."

To carry out the vision, new values, operating principles and business, and financial objectives have been developed.

In their February 1997 meeting, BSSB trustees agreed with management that the agency needs a new name. Draper announced to messengers attending the June 1997 SBC in Dallas the board's intention to change the name.

James L. Sullivan, who retired in 1975 after 22 years as president of the Sunday School Board, told trustees Sept. 15 in a videotaped message that as long as 40 years ago a new name was investigated for the agency.

"I want to express my joy that a study has been made again, and apparently a name has been found that should be satisfactory to everyone," Sullivan said. "It has my ardent support and approval, and I hope the convention gets a recommendation from the trustees to that effect."

Mike Arrington, executive director for corporate affairs of the board and chairman of the 19-member employee naming committee, said interviews were conducted with leaders throughout the SBC as part of the exploration of a new name.

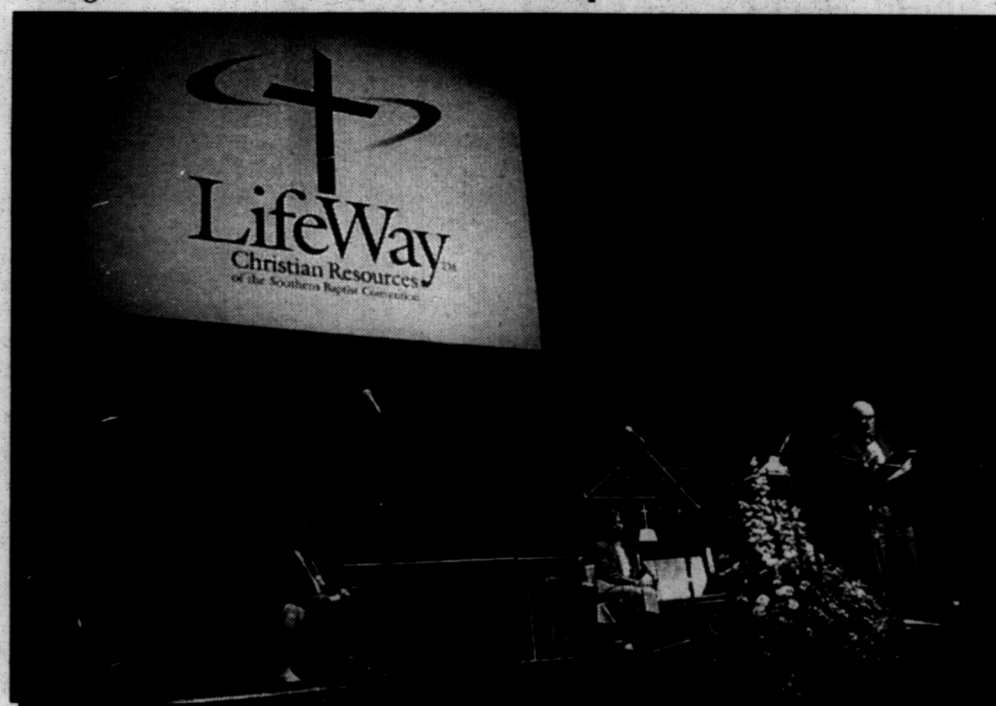
"We determined that a new name should reflect six key attributes of the Sunday School Board to communicate that we are Christian, approachable, multifaceted, ministry- and customer-focused, dynamic and high quality," Arrington said.

Draper said a logo, developed under the leadership of Paula Savage, a creative art

director for the board, includes a key element from the present logo and the strongest symbol of Christian faith, the cross.

"Shaded curves on each side of the cross symbolize the Holy Spirit at work in the world. They also illustrate the energy of our commitment to meeting the needs of people in a world that is constantly changing."

"We live in a unique moment," Draper concluded. "We approach a new millennium. We must use every method at our disposal to point people to the timeless, eternal truth in Christ. He is the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but through him."



NASHVILLE — Members of the Sunday School Board's employee naming committee lead a meeting in Nashville to present LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention to more than 1,100 of their co-workers. Tommy Dixon (right) of the discipleship and family development division presides as the proposed logo for the new name is projected behind the platform. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

Missionaries shed committees for witnessing

DAKAR, Senegal (BP) — What do you do when committees get in the way of something important, like, for example, winning people to Christ and starting churches?

Southern Baptist missionaries in three countries of West Africa faced that dilemma this past year — and the bold solution they chose foreshadowed the approach International Mission Board leaders would later select to revitalize the board's entire missions effort.

Like most of their colleagues elsewhere in the world, Southern Baptist missionaries in Senegal, The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau invested large blocks of time to keep the gears of their mission organizations grinding.

"Under the old system, we had to stop work every three months, go down to the coast and attend an executive committee meeting because the constitution of our organization required it," said Chris Austin, an agriculturist who has served among the Mandinka people of The Gambia since 1983.

"We were busy maintaining the structure while the Mandinka went to hell," said his wife, Karen.

So, late in the spring of 1996, missionaries in each of the three countries decided to dissolve their old mission organizations and realign themselves in a radically different manner. While they had traditionally focused on developing ministries within a specific country, the missionaries elected instead to divide into teams committed to taking the gospel to specific ethnic people groups.

"It was obvious the old system was not going to get the job done," said Gary Inman, former business manager and treasurer for missionaries in Togo who recently transferred to Senegal to work as business facilitator for the missionary team focused on the Wolof people group.

"After 25 years of work, there were only 25 Christians among 3 million Wolof.

The new approach does present several challenges.

For one thing, team members must trust facilitators to do the best they can with difficult tasks like buying a new vehicle or locating missionary housing.

Another challenge lies in the way teams reach decisions. Rather than the time-honored "democratic" committee vote, the new people group teams will work toward a consensus identified by their team leaders.

A thornier matter is manag-

ing finances. Since people groups spread across national borders, a missionary assigned to one people group might travel through two or more countries. Expenses incurred in the currency of one country might need to be registered on books kept in a different currency in another country.

"It could take a while for people to develop the trust in us that's needed for us to take care of things for them," said

Larry Verlander, former business manager and treasurer for Senegal missionaries.

"Our intention was to take the first step in liberating missionaries to do their task, rather than have so much time and energy drained away in administration and internal organization," said IMB President Jerry Rankin.

"Our vision and desire is that we will all catch that passion for winning the whole world to Christ."

MBC deadlines posted

The Baptist Record annually provides readers with a list of official activities and related gatherings for the annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC). The 1997 annual meeting and related gatherings are scheduled for Oct. 27-29 at First Church, Jackson, and other venues around the metro area.

The deadline for submitting these activities for announcement in The Baptist Record is at the close of business on Thursday, Oct. 2. Please include:

- ◆ formal name and type of activity.
- ◆ date, time, and location of activity.
- ◆ program speakers.
- ◆ costs of attending and any meals provided (where applicable).
- ◆ contact person and telephone number for more information.

Mail the information to arrive by Oct. 2 to: The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Information may be faxed to (601) 353-6184, or e-mailed to Compuserve address 70420.37. To avoid mistakes, information will not be accepted over the telephone.



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

The recent death of my daughter after a long, painful illness has caused me to doubt my faith. God has been no comfort to me. How can I find my way back?

your mind is less cluttered, you will be better able to hear God's still, small voice.

My first-grader is using bad words he hears in school. How can I nip this before it becomes a habit?

God has not left you, but your hurt is so great that you are focusing on it instead of God. Statistics show that at least 18-24 months are needed to cope with a difficult death before a grieving loved one can again see hope. Begin keeping a diary that will track your emotions and help you understand in written form what you are feeling inside. After a few weeks, you will be able to review the diary to see how far you have come, and that will help you plan where you want to go. Stay around close friends, but realize they may not always know what to say or do. Enjoy their willingness to help you, and overlook their mistakes. Locate a support group where you can share your story and observe others who are ahead of you in this process. Start an exercise program, which serves as an excellent outlet while you deal with your grief. Finally, keep God's Word close at hand, stay in church, and pray. When

Your first-grader is learning to express himself, and somehow he has come to understand that using bad words will gain attention for him. Rather than overreacting or shaming your son, respond with, "Let's say that another way." You can encourage correct behavior by allowing him to see that he has a choice in using more appropriate words. Find out where your son is picking up this bad language. If it comes from television, for example, switch the channel and say, "We don't let that type of talk come into our home." The same is true if one of your son's friends is causing the problem—tell him, "We don't talk that way in our home." Your son will see that he can take a stand for what's right, and you will strike an early blow against the peer pressure he will inevitably feel as he gets older.

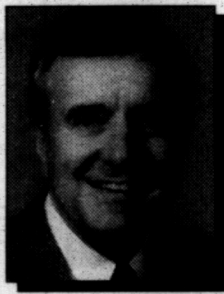
Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

WBS preview clinic set

The Mississippi author of the 1998 Winter Bible Study distributed across the Southern Baptist Convention will be the lead teacher for the study's preview clinic in his home state.

Frank Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson, will teach "Timely Answers to Key Questions: A Study of Selected Parables Unique to the Gospel of Luke," from 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 14, in the church's Fellowship Hall West.

Joining Pollard in leading the study will be Ann B. Cannon of Chamblee, Ga., a conference leader, author, and teacher.



Pollard



Cannon

Pollard's narrative showcases 12 parables from the gospel of Luke, termed "earthly stories with heavenly meanings," and is grouped into four sessions.

◆ Session One: Salvation. The Prodigal Son; The Great Supper; and The Rich Man and Lazarus.

◆ Session Two: Basic Training. The Tower; The King; The Dishonest Steward; and The Pounds.

◆ Session Three: Daily Living. The Unjust Judge; and The Good Samaritan.

◆ Session Four: Clear Thinking. The Rich Fool; The Chief Seats; and The Pharisee and the Publican.

The preview clinic is open to anyone interested in the study. There is no fee, and reservations are not required. Lunch will be served compliments of the Sunday School Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

For more information contact Larry Salter or Mark Lott, MBCB Sunday School Department, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



GOOD NEWS — Villagers in Kadar, Senegal, listen as Southern Baptist missionary Lee Kauffman compares the fresh water flowing from a new well to the rivers of living water God offers those who open their hearts to Jesus. (BP Photo by Jonathan Henderson)



Romanian seeing American dream fulfilled

By Mary Ellen Powell
Correspondent

Large, blue eyes, a gentle smile, and a pleasant accent are the first things you notice when you meet Gabriela Poenar. If you spend much time with her, you cannot help but notice a strong faith in God. Her faith has been forged in the fires of adversity, the type of adversity that Christians in her home country of Romania face everyday. But through this strong faith a young woman, who lived in a country where most people ignore the existence of God, was enabled to dream of one day coming to study with fellow Christians in America.

"I dreamed a lot about being able to study in a Christian institution. Just about 7 years ago that was a dream without any hope. But God has shown me again and again that he is the God of miracles. With him, impossible does not exist. I have learned that one should never build dreams unless he builds them with God. When you dream with God, miracles happen," says Gabriela, a 22 year-old junior majoring in psychology at Mississippi College (MC).

Gabriela's presence at MC is indeed a miracle for a young woman who grew up in communist Romania under the dictator Ceausescu. Her home church, First Baptist Church of Targu Mures, Transylvania, in

central Romania, consisted of only a few families who met in a home. The church members knew they were being watched by the secret police, an organization that worked behind the scenes to control any threats to the communist government. Gabriela's own parents were imprisoned for hiding Bibles in their garage.

Gabriela explains that rather than being dismayed by the persecution, her parents expected such things to occur. "My father knew that the secret police constantly watched his activities and listened in on our phone calls," she says. "Instead of being afraid, he always found his strength in God and clung to Him for our only hope."

In Romania, loving Christian parents, four siblings, and a supportive church family surrounded Gabriela, but beyond the walls of church and home was a world where the existence of God was always in

question. Even today, years after the fall of communism, evangelical Christians are persecuted for their faith and there have been recent reports of such Christians being beaten.

Somehow, in what would seem the most unlikely of circumstances, God planted a dream in Gabriela's heart to attend college at a Christian school in the U.S. The dream began in 1992 when a group of Christian volunteers came to Romania. One of the group's participants, Richard Lister, asked her if she would begin thinking about attending an American Christian college.

In 1994, the dream became more of a reality as a group of young people from First Church of Jackson traveled to Romania to lead youth camps. At the end of the camp, one of the group's participants, Elizabeth Arnold, told Gabriela that if she wanted to attend college in the U.S., then Arnold would talk to her father about helping raise the money.

In 1995, Elizabeth and her father, Bobby Arnold, visited Gabriela and assured her that the money for an American College education would be found. By August 16 of the same year, she had been miraculously granted a visa and was on her way to America.

Upon arriving in Mississippi, she registered at MC. Her first day on campus, there was an orientation meeting for all new students that she and her American "dad," Bobby Arnold attended. "We sat down in the orientation meeting," she says, "and the first thing they did was pray. I immediately began to weep. After all my years in a country where God was never acknowledged, to sit in

school and hear people pray—it was overwhelming."

Since coming to MC, Gabriela has been impressed by the people's kindness. She appreciates the freedom to say you are a Christian and to study God's Word probably more than any other student on campus. She has been especially impressed with the Christian friends she has made at the Baptist Student Union.

Her involvement with BSU began even before she arrived at MC. "About one week before I came to MC," she says, "I had heard about BSU for the first time in my life. An American missionary assured me that BSU would become a special part of my life. He was right. BSU has been a blessing to my life."



Gabriela Poenar



Among the many things she has enjoyed about BSU, the annual Leadership Training Conference (LTC) has been the most memorable.

"I've always believed that the U.S.A. is the loudest voice God has on earth. After the fall of communism, American missionaries graciously touched my life and the heart of my nation. At the summer missions commissioning service at LTC, I had the opportunity to be on the other side and to see missionaries being sent out. I realized that they are ordinary people used by God to influence the lives of others," she says.

Gabriela also feels that BSU has helped her keep her priorities in order. "My greatest challenge in college is managing my time," she explains. "Life in college is very hectic. It is so easy to focus on things that are urgent and forget the things that are important. BSU is always a reminder that my focus needs to be on what is most important: God."

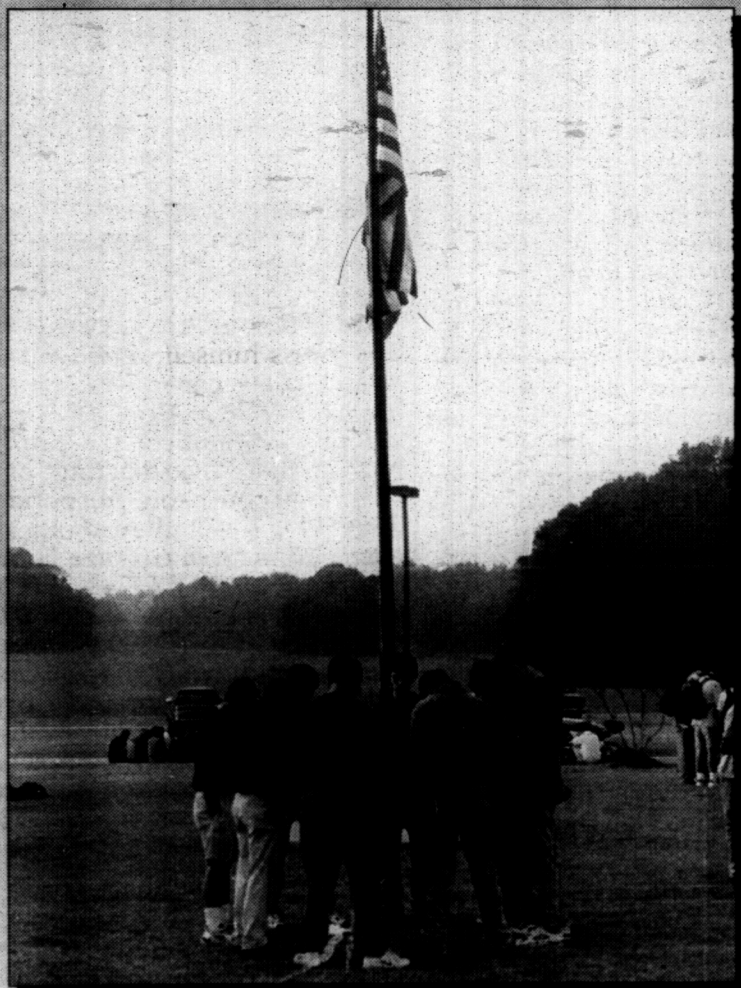
During the upcoming school year, Gabriela will serve on the BSU Leadership Team as the head of ministry to internationals. She knows that her own experiences as an international student will help her empathize with all they are going through.

"When international students come here, it is a very traumatic experience. I want to help them as they go through the transition of coming to America. And, because many international students are not Christians, I pray that I will be able to tell them about Jesus," she says.

Upon graduation, Gabriela would like to possibly pursue a master's degree in Christian counseling. With or without a master's degree, however, she intends to return to Romania to minister to her fellow countrymen.

Regardless of where post-MC life takes her, she will have learned a great deal from her time in America. Gabriela ends by saying, "I was taught by communism that school and faith could not be put together; coming to MC and being involved in BSU has shown me that this was not true."

See You at the pole



PRAYER AT THE POLE — Students form early morning circles of prayer at the flag pole in front of Clinton High School on Wednesday, September 17, as part of the world-wide "See You at the Pole" prayer emphasis. The Baptist Record will run a report of "See You at the Pole" in Mississippi in the Oct. 2 edition. (Photo by Carl M. White)

Cancellation notice

The Volunteer Chaplains Training set for September 26, 1997, at the Mississippi Baptist Medical Center, Jackson, has been cancelled.

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST

1922

Mississippi always vital BSU link

By Jerry Merriman
State BSU Director



Merriman

This year marks the 75th anniversary for Baptist Student Union throughout the Southern Baptist Convention. In this issue of The Baptist Record, you will read comments of individuals who have been impacted by this ministry through the years.

Mississippi has been a vital part of the historical legacy of BSU through the years. In 1923, the first local Baptist Student Union was begun at the "W". The work spread to other campuses through the years and

today ministers to students on thirty-two campuses throughout the state.

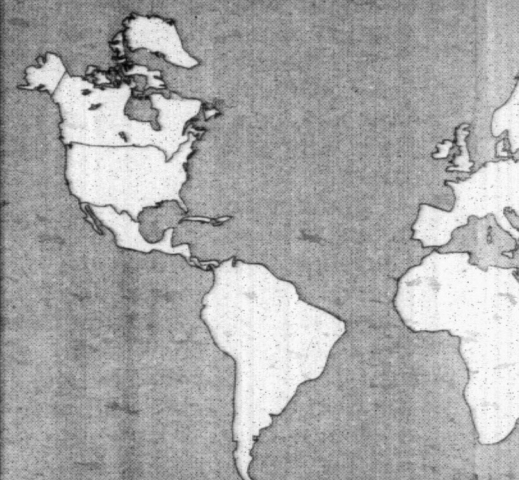
On those thirty-two campuses, there are approximately 100,000 students. Last year, BSU's reached 11,132 students through local ministries, 5,218 of whom were actively involved in campus programs. Unofficial reports indicate 38,750 Baptist and Baptist preference students. Student conversions numbered 225; 608 were reported preparing for church related vocations; and 1,860 students attended all state and national meetings.

Student missions continues to be an integral part of our BSU program. During the 1996-97 school year, one hundred and eleven students from 20

campuses were appointed to serve in 24 states and 6 foreign countries. This was the largest number of students commissioned in the fifty year history of the program. As a result of their summer service, 1,805 decisions for Christ were reported and a total of \$125,318.74 was expended.

So, happy birthday BSU... and thank you Mississippi Baptists for your continued interest in and support of a ministry through Baptist Student Union. Our entire Mississippi BSU family salutes you for the investment you are making to prepare tomorrow's leaders TODAY!

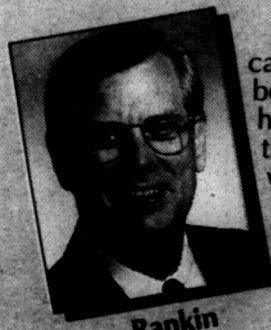
Students touch



...1,875 Summer Missionaries commissioned
...\$1,886,700 raised by BSUs to date
...111 students served in 1997, largest number

JERRY RANKIN

President, International Mission Board



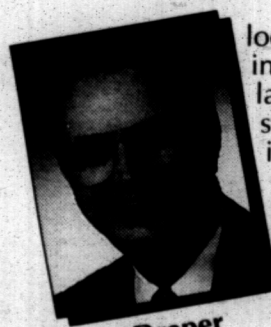
Rankin

Introduction to the BSU my first week on campus as a freshman at Mississippi College, began an influence and involvement that has had ramifications throughout my life. It was through friendships and BSU activities that I was nurtured by others modeling a dedicated lifestyle and Christ like witness.

My initial training in leadership skills came through serving on the BSU council and assuming positions of ministry responsibility.

JAMES T. DRAPER, JR.

President, Baptist Sunday School Board



Draper

It all started 75 years ago in Memphis, TN, in a small room overlooking the Mississippi River. There, with the convention's blessings, "two desks, a typewriter, a stenographer, and a dream," the late Frank Leavell launched a Southern Baptist ministry to college students that would eventually cross the United States and reach into dozens of countries around the world.

That ministry took the form of the "Baptist Student Union," an organization which has had more of an impact on the denomination than most Southern Baptists realize. In fact, we may owe college students thanks for the very survival of our denomination.

Faced with two embezzlement scandals, the stock market crash, and the approaching depression, the SBC in the 1920s was in shaky condition at best. The Cooperative Program was launched in 1925 to promote denominational unity and channel church offerings for maximized ministry. It was slow catching on until Leavell ignited a fire in the hearts of Baptist college students. By the thousands in the 20s and 30s, they crisscrossed the country, delivering inspirational messages and challenging Southern Baptists to denominational cooperation and great loyalty to their church. College students also played an important role in the success of Vacation Bible School. Tens of thousands were involved in leading or helping with VBS around the country between 1930-60. They helped our churches catch a vision for a program that last year resulted in 53,000 professions of faith for Christ.

Seventy-five years later, we still have proof student ministry is a wise investment for Southern Baptists. More than 237,000 students on almost 1,000 campuses were reached through BSU and church ministries to college students last year. They gave \$3.2 million to support missions, sent out more than 27,000 missionaries, and helped start 362 new churches or missions. More than 5,500 professions of faith were reported.

By Carl M. White
Associate Editor

At a recent leadership conference at the Baptist building the participants were asked to raise a hand if Baptist Student Union (BSU) had been a positive influence in their life. Almost everyone raised their hand. It is hard to find a group of Baptist leaders who have not been influenced by BSU. It has been a constant witness on campuses for 75 change-filled years.

Samuel Sanford, Jr., long time BSU worker in Louisiana in his book "Baptist Campus Ministry at Crossroads," identifies three generations of student work and how the BSU has adapted.

The first generation was led by the BSU Secretary and was characterized by on-campus rallies and Bible studies. It lasted till the late 1950s.

The second generation was led by the BSU Director and featured the development of student summer missions.

The third generation is led by the Campus Minister and features a wide diversity of ministries and mission projects.

Sanford believes student work is now on the edge of a new generation.

"Through the years, each generation has presented BSU with unique challenges and opportunities for ministry," according to Jerry Merriman, state BSU director. "The current group of collegians referred to as Busters or Generation Xers is no exception."

There are many negatives attributed to this generation, Merriman noted, among them a "lack of making long-term commitments, a



MEETING OF THE MINDS — Student activities at Survival '97. From middle Slidell, La.; Egao Nakamura, Japan; Amanda Booth, Clinton; Lucy Pope, Hattiesburg; Te Latricia Knott, Jackson; Yoshi Fujii, Japan;

growing disenchantment, lack of respect for authority, and diverse backgrounds." Yet, each generation is unique and has its own place in history.

"Researchers tell us the best, most technologically come along in a long time also noted that they are comfortable with change and are willing to take the risk for worthwhile causes."

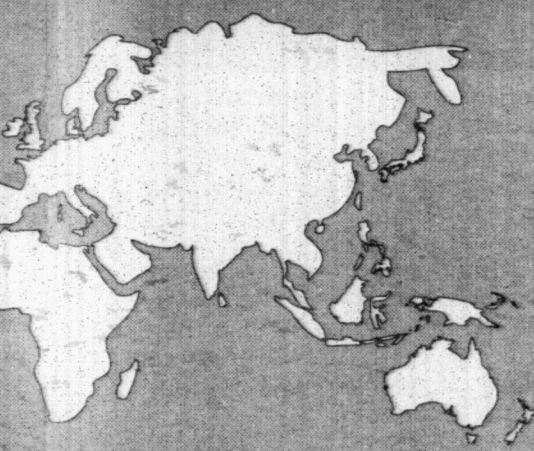
Though Merriman thinks

STUDENT UNION

75 Years

1997

reaching our world



Commissioned during 50 year history
date
largest number in 50 in history of the program

headed into the future



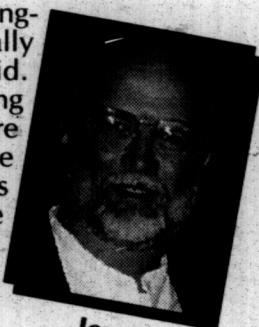
Students from the USM-BSU relax after a weekend of work. (middle left, Britnay Gregory, Clinton; Erica Summey, Jackson; Amanda Wade, Jackson; Tamika Taylor, Jackson; David Turnage, Columbia; Stacey Smith, Columbus; Terri Turnage, Columbia; Kris Mullinax, Biloxi. (BR special photo)

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Yet, Merriman believes this
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change, and eager to volun-
le causes."
an thinks the occasion of the

lege campuses across the nation from 1925 till just
before his death in 1990, this native Mississippian
wrote in 1985 that "BSU ... is the best denomina-
tional outreach to our campuses now being done
by any of our nation's main-line denominations.
Therefore, let us rejoice in its ministry, pray for it
faithfully, and thank our heavenly Father that this
vital ministry is alive, well, and growing!"
BSU is 75 years young. The word that the
fire of God has dimmed on the campus is a
rumor. Where the wind blows, the fire flames,
and the Spirit is moving at the BSU.

DAVID B. JONES, PH.D.
Counseling Associates of Mississippi, Ridgeland

The year 1970 was an interesting and changing time to begin university studies, especially in psychology and philosophy as I did. Everything was being questioned. The long established bedrock's of our culture were unstable. Students who had never before challenged their faith were exploring options to Christianity. I thank God often, that in the midst of this, I found the Baptist Student Union at Mississippi State University. Within that fellowship, I was loved, pushed, encouraged, prepared, and tested. The BSU offered the anchor that I needed. It became my home, a place where I could question with freedom and be taught with love. Through four years of undergraduate and one of graduate school, BSU gave me fellowship, opportunities for leadership and service, the chance to learn from wonderful Christian teachers, and maybe best of all, an introduction to Cathy, my wife and best friend of twenty-two years. Thank you BSU.



Jones

MERRIE COBURN WILEY
Homemaker, Jackson

BSU was the very center of my college life at the W. It sheltered me as I grew from an insecure freshman into a mature young woman. The leadership opportunities BSU afforded taught me invaluable lessons in organization and responsibility. Serving as State BSU President was a very special honor. As I met and worked with BSU Directors and leaders from all the college campuses throughout our state, I was able to fully appreciate the scope of BSU with the visions and dedication of adults who gave themselves to providing a positive Christian environment for students.



Wiley

SAM SUMRALL
National Awards Salesman, Jackson

Looking back it is with a great deal of certainty that BSU played a vital role in helping to make those values, instilled in me through my parents and local church, concrete and relative to my college years. It was through time spent in BSU activities, associations, and with friends that gave me a sense of God's presence in my life. My life today is still being very positively impacted by these experiences.



Sumrall

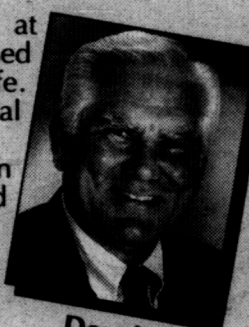
BOBBY DOUGLAS
Pastor, First Church, Columbus

I graduated high school and enrolled at Itawamba Junior College in 1957. God used BSU to challenge and nurture my life. Mississippi Baptists had prepared a special ministry for my life.

My life focus was changed dramatically in this atmosphere of Christian friendship and accountability.

I learned to study God's word and sense His leadership in my life. I was challenged to refine my behavior and be a witness to others. Eventually, it was in this setting that God called me to be a preacher/pastor.

Words are inadequate to properly say thank you to Mississippi Baptists for BSU or express the impact this ministry had in my life.



Douglas

ALON BEE
Deposit Guaranty National Bank, Sr. Vice President, Jackson

BSU provided further development of the foundation my parents had begun for me as a young person. At Ole Miss I was further challenged in my Christian growth and sought balance in the Lord's shaping of my mind, emotions and will.

BSU was a key part of shaping my life.



Bee

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

- First State Student Volunteer Secretary - J. Norris Palmer, 1920
- First Local Student Secretary/Director
 - ◆ Sr. College - Mary Frances Johnson, Mississippi State College for Women (The W), 1924
 - ◆ Jr. College - Katherine Miley, Jones County, 1938
- First Baptist Student Union
 - ◆ Sr. College - Mississippi State College for Women (MSCW), Frances Conn, President, 1923
 - ◆ Jr. College - Clarke, W.C. Mills, President, 1925
- First Baptist Student Center
 - ◆ Sr. College - The Baptist Workshop, MSCW, 1924
- ◆ Jr. College - East Central, Gladys Bryant, Director, 1966
- First Student Summer Missionary, Corinne Griffin Blue Mountain College, 1947
- First State Baptist Student Convention, 1924
 - ◆ MSCW and Immanuel Baptist Church, Carl N. Travis, President, Mississippi College (MC)
- First State Student Spring Retreat (LTC), 1931
 - ◆ Baptist Student Center MSCW, Columbus, W.O. Vaught, President, MC
- First Appropriation for "Student Work", 1914
 - ◆ \$2500 for work in agricultural high schools and new mission fields
- First Budget for Department of Student Work, 1943 — \$9,000
 - ◆ \$5000 - BSU Work, \$4,000 - Secretary, 1943
- First Southwide BSU Activity
 - ◆ April 1923 - Regional Conference in Chattanooga, Tenn.
 - ◆ Feb. 1924 - Regional Conference in Murfreesboro, Tenn.

The Road to Everlasting Life



God intends for all his children to live with him forever, but the road to everlasting life is blocked. To find that road you must:

Admit that you are a sinner.
There is none righteous, not even one. (Rom. 3:10)

Accept God's love for you.
God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom. 5:8)

Acknowledge Christ as Lord.
If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved. (Rom. 10:9)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Mississippi Baptist Church for spiritual guidance.

IMB worker in Philippines dies unexpectedly

GENERAL SANTOS CITY, Philippines (BP) — A 36-year-old Southern Baptist worker in the Philippines died unexpectedly Sept. 18, apparently from an allergic reaction.

The worker, Berri Matz of Bixby, Okla., collapsed at home and was pronounced dead on arrival at a hospital in General Santos City. U.S. Embassy reports listed the cause of death as cardiac arrest due to asthma-induced aspiration.

A memorial service is scheduled at LaGao Baptist Church in

General Santos City at 10 a.m. Sept. 20. Her body will then be flown to Manila, the Philippines' capital city, where diplomatic papers will be processed; said Phil Beasley, business manager for the organization of International Mission Board



Matz

personnel in the Mindanao and Visayan Islands region of the Philippines. It will then be brought back to Bixby for burial.

Matz and her husband, Larry, were appointed by the International Mission Board in June 1996. Matz was the mother of two children, ages 10 and 8, and had learned only weeks ago she was pregnant with a third.

The Matzes arrived last October in General Santos City on Mindanao, the southernmost of the Philippines' two

largest islands, to study language. They were to move soon to Cebu City, where he would be a church starter and she would be a church and home worker.

The former Berri Gayle Williams, she graduated from the University of Tulsa with a degree in special education in 1983. They married in 1981. Before their appointment, she had worked as a teacher in Marion, Ark., West Memphis, Ark., and Englewood, Ohio.

BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

The Mississippi College Music Department will present a chamber music recital Tuesday, Sept. 30 at 8:15 p.m. in Provine Chapel on the Clinton campus. The concert will feature members Carol Joy Sparkman, pianist; Jeff McLelland, organist; Patricia Walston, pianist; James Sclater, clarinetist/composer; Chandler Thompson, soprano; and James Richard Joiner, baritone. The musicians will be joined by the String Quartet from the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra. The concert will include compositions by Bach, Handel, Finzi, Faure, and James Sclater. The public is invited and there is no charge for admission. For more information call the Music Department at 925-3440.

The Blue Mountain College Baptist Student Union held its annual campus revival Sept. 8-9. Rick Ousley, pastor of Brook Hills Church, Birmingham, Ala. was the featured speaker. Shawn Davis, a former student and local pastor, led the worship and praise time each night before the message. Two students gave their lives to Jesus Christ with many other students making decisions to have a deeper, more committed walk with the Lord.

REVIVAL DATES

Mt. Zion (Rankin): Sept. 27-Oct. 1; Saturday, church wide banquet, 6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m., dinner, and 1 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; Tommy Mitchell, Pearl, evangelist; Lew King, Jackson, music; Tommy R. Bufkin, pastor.

Scotland, Winona: Sept. 28-Oct. 1; services, 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., luncheon services at noon; Jim Futral, Jackson, evangelist; Bobby Whittington, Glen Allen, music; Mark Worsham, pastor.

Lynn Ray Road, Petal: Sept. 28-Oct. 1; Sunday, lunch in fellowship hall; W. L. Sheffield, evangelist; Ed Williams, music.

Wanilla (Lawrence): Sept. 28-Oct. 3; 11 a.m.; Sunday morning and 7 p.m. nightly; George Lewis, pastor, evangelist; Sally Cody, music.

Grace, Philadelphia: Oct. 5-8; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Kevin Jones, Soso, evangelist; Mark

Manning, Philadelphia, music; Dennis Duvall, pastor.

Southway Church, Brookhaven: Oct. 5-8; Sunday 10:45 a.m. followed by covered dish lunch, and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. 7 p.m.; James E. Messer, Sr., Theodore Ala, evangelist; Charles V. Rushing, Brookhaven, music; James E. (Danny) Dodds, pastor.

Lowrey Memorial, Blue Mountain: Oct. 5-8; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. nightly; Billy Peacock, former pastor and

missionary, evangelist; Lou Ann Ford, Booneville, music; Don E. Brown, pastor.

First, Tutwiler: Sept. 28 - Oct. 1; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. 7 p.m.; Billy Guest, Magee, evangelist; J. B. Hayes, Jr., pastor.

Green's Creek Church, Petal: Sept. 28 - Oct. 1; Sunday 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. 7 p.m. Johnny Tucker, Citronelle, Ala, evangelist; Mark King, Minister of Music, Green's Creek, music; Mike Routon, pastor.

STAFF CHANGES

Byron (Bunkum) Cutrer has been called to Dauphin Way Church, Mobile, Ala., as minister of music effective Aug. 15. A native of Osyka, Cutrer received his education at Mississippi College. His previous place of service was First Church, Norfolk, Va.

Rocky Creek Church, George Association, has called two staff members. **Andy Holder**, a recent graduate of William Carey College had been serving as summer minister of youth, now begins his duties as full time minister of youth. **John McCartney**, former minister of music and youth at Center Terrace Church, Canton,

began his duties as minister of music and youth in August. McCartney is a senior at Mississippi College and plans to graduate in December.

Heucks Retreat Church, Brookhaven, has called **Dale Heard** as minister of music effective Sept. 1. His previous place of service was Wesson Church, Wesson.

Hurley Church, Hurley, has called **Breaux Tagueant** as pastor effective Aug. 31. His previous place of service was Terry's Creek Church, Magnolia.

Shady Grove Church, Bogue Chitto, has called **Gregory Forbus** as pastor effective Sept. 7. A native of Illinois, Forbus received his education at Judson College and New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was Williamsburg Church, Collins.

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ACCEPTING RESUMES: full-time conservative Youth/Children's Minister. Send to PO box 753, Waldron, AR 72958.

FBC, LAKE is accepting resumes for a part time music director. If interested, contact Bruce Weems at 775-3876 or mail resumes to FBC, Lake, Box 157, Lake, MS 39092, Attn: Bruce Weems.

YOUTH OUTINGS? Paintball-games! Other functions! Curry Creek Outdoors. (601) 722-9000.

WANTED: Full-time Minister of Music/Education. Send resumes to: Calvary Baptist Church, PO Box 4097, Meridian, MS 39304.

ATTENTION! Pastors, Ministers of Music, Ministers of Education, Ministers of Youth and all other staff members — Hundreds of churches each month call us looking for a Pastor or Staff member. Call (800) 917-9599 for your confidential information packet. Southern Baptist Ministers Staffing Service, PO Box 198726, Nashville, TN 37219-8726; Regional Office — New Orleans, LA; <http://www.ministerservices.com>

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JUST FOR THE RECORD

Modern Day Noah will be performing in concert at Harperville Church, Harperville, Sept. 27 at 7 p.m. For more information, call (601) 625-8683.

Lynn Ray Road Church, Petal, will host The Bibletones and special guest Forgiven in concert on Sept. 20 at 7 p.m.

Sidon Church, Sidon, will celebrate its 110th anniversary, Sept. 28, at 10:45 a.m. John DeFoore, former Sidon resident, now residing in Comfort, Texas, will be the featured speaker. Special music by Ronald Edwards, Coila; and Raymond McKinnon, Brandon. Lunch will be served in fellowship hall following worship service.



Ground breaking services were recently held for a new church building for Unity Church, Simpson. The church was organized on Dec. 15, 1996. Building committee members pictured (from left) are Billy Joe Buckley, Wanda McLendon, Glenda Breeden, Jerome McLendon, pastor, Charles (Dub) Bridges, and Sells Walker Jr.

Ethel Church reaches 100th

Ethel Church, Ethel, will celebrate its 100th anniversary-homecoming on Oct. 5. Worship services will begin at 10 a.m. Former pastors who will be speaking are Aaron Lewis, Eugene Bailey, and Dwight

Brown. Caley Ray Nichols, former pastor, will bring the main message. Jimmy Sledge, former music director, will lead the music. A covered dish luncheon will be served following the service. Keith Dowden is pastor.

HOMEcomings

Friendship, Aberdeen: Sept. 28; worship, 10:30 a.m.; noon meal; 1 p.m. singing; Charles Ransier, New Albany, evangelist; Hubert Greer, Wesson, music; Todd Bowen, pastor.

Larry Livingston, Grenada, guest speaker; Larry Choucolli, pastor.

Belden, Belden: Sept. 28; worship services, 8:30 and 10:30 a.m.; Bible study, 9:30 a.m.; lunch following 10:30 a.m. service; worship, 7 p.m.; Carroll Robertson, Ripley, guest speaker; Don Baggett, pastor.

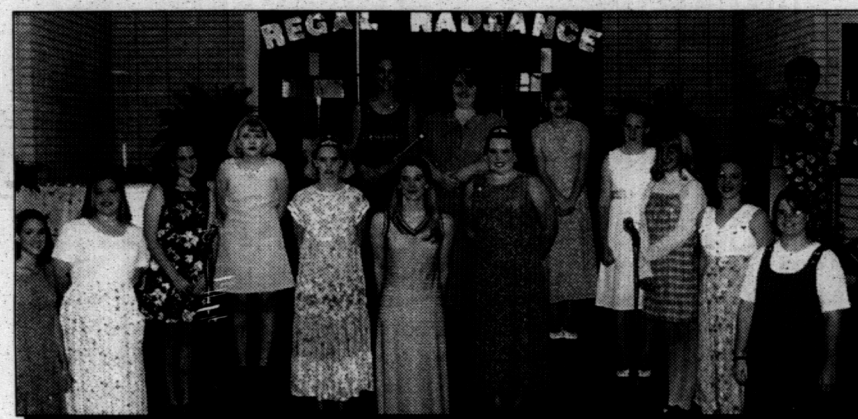
Harmony, Brookhaven: Oct. 5; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; noon meal; 1 p.m. singing; Phillip R. Hemby, Brookhaven, guest speaker.

Hope, Philadelphia: Sept. 28; 11 a.m.; noon meal; 1:30 p.m. singing, The Shining Light, Vicksburg, guest singers; Jerry Jones, Philadelphia, guest speaker; Jimmy Young, pastor.

Improve, Columbia: Oct. 5; Sunday School 10 a.m.; worship 11 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall, noon; 1:30 p.m. service focusing on friends and family who have passed away; Tommy Jones, Meridian, guest speaker; Bruce Pruitt, guest singer; Ron Burch, pastor.

Bethel, Drew: Oct. 19; 11 a.m.; covered dish in fellowship hall, noon; 2 p.m. singing; The Southern Plainsmen Quartet, Hornbeck, La., guest singers;

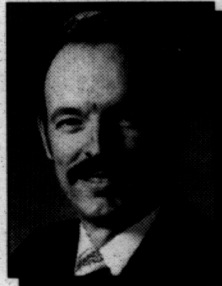
Antioch Church, Neshoba Association: Sept. 28; worship 11 a.m.; singing and dedication of new sanctuary 1:30 p.m., following lunch in fellowship hall; Danny Lanier, Little Rock, guest speaker; James Young, pastor.



Macedonia Church, Lincoln Association, held an Acteens Recognition Service, "Regal Radiances" on Sept. 7, under the leadership of Minnie Case, Acteens director. Girls receiving Queen with Crown were: Misty Case, Jessica Smith, Gayla Hall, Callie Calcote, Lindsey Moore, Katie McCraven, Dana Coke, Rebecca Smith, Kristy Britt, and Heather Britt. Girls receiving Queen with Scepter were: Laina Nordan, Autumn Smith, and Nikki Hall. Girls receiving Queen with Regent were: Crystal Case and Geanne Allred.

NAMES IN THE NEWS

Dee DeBold has completed an eight month interim pastorate at Providence Church, Jayess, and is available for supply preaching or a bivocational pastorate beginning Oct. 1. He pastored 20 years full time, 12 of which were spent in Pennsylvania on the Home Mission field. DeBold may be reached at Rt. 1, Box 13-AA, Monticello, MS 39654, phone (601) 587-7806.



DeBold



First Church, Summit, honored **John McCall** with a gift of \$5,000 to the John G. McCall Christian Vocations Scholarship. The church established the scholarship when McCall served as interim pastor in 1994. Pictured (from left) are Roger Graves, chairman of deacons; Howell Todd, president, Mississippi College; John McCall; and Vicki McCall.

Dove Award Winning Trio

The **MARTINS**
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6:00 p.m.

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GREGORY C. BOWERS, PASTOR

Gulf Coast BSUers forsake 'comfort zone'

By Jackie Ball
Associate BSU Director, MGCCC

No campfires at night or mountain hiking during the day, but Gulf Coast BSU 'roughed it' during our spring break missions trip. Students and staff used their vacation time at an inner-city mission in Atlanta, Georgia. It was a tremendous opportunity to climb out of our comfort zone and enter an area unlike our own — yet see how all people are the same, in need of Christ and his love. Sleeping late or working on a tan might have been more fun during spring break, but nothing could have been more rewarding!

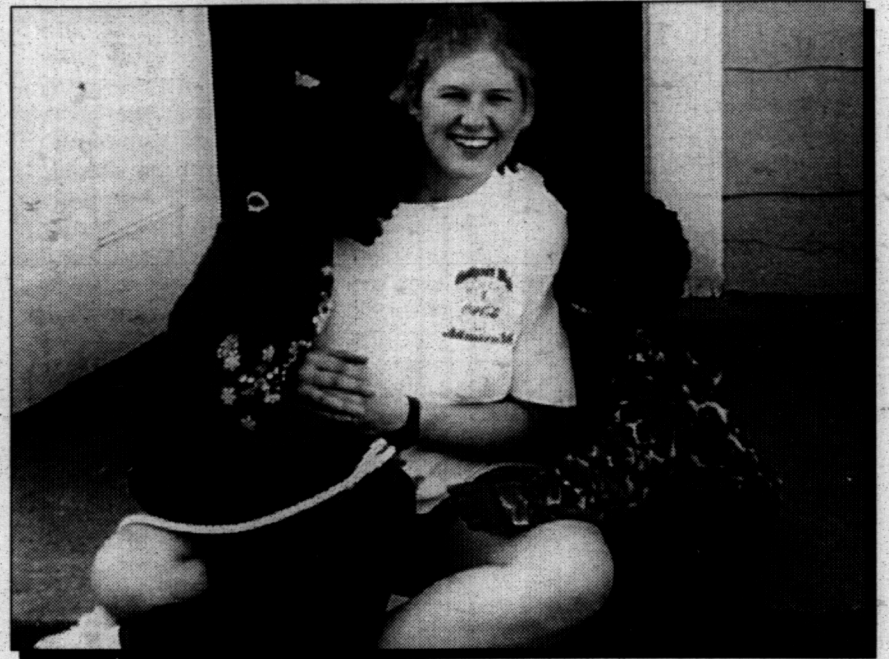
Only one student had ever been on a mission trip before, so the world of mission work was new to most of the group of 15. Each morning we worked around the Stewart Mission Center, cleaning, painting, and organizing. Raking and scrubbing may not be listed in the Bible as spiritual gifts, but these Gulf Coast college students sure exercised them.

In the afternoons and evenings, we worked with the children, helping them with homework, playing on the playground, and leading Bible clubs. We also provided the program for senior adults one morning, sharing skits, songs, testimonies, and Bible study.

Though the ladies praised our being there, we felt certain we had received the greater blessing as they began to share how the Lord Jesus Christ has blessed them and the impact that the mission center has had in the lives of their children and grandchildren. As one student said, "In every activity, God allowed us to get back more than we gave."

We roughed it - sleeping on the floor at the mission center and fixing our own meals, but we began each morning with a group devotion and Bible study.

At the end of each day we would meet again to close our devotion for the day with introspection on our experiences and how God had worked. We ended



HUGS ALL AROUND — Gulf Coast BSU student Jessica Dale is surrounded by playful children at the Stewart Mission Center in Atlanta. (BR special photo)

the trip with a time of sharing as everyone expressed their feelings about the trip and the work.

This group, made up of students and staff from all three Gulf

Coast campuses, worked together cooperatively and as a real family. It was obvious that God was in control and was working through and in each one.

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EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Brother against brother

Genesis 4-5

By Jason Bird

From the very first words, the Genesis record follows a logical pattern of progression. That pattern continues with the fourth chapter. After showing how sin entered the world through the choices of Adam and Eve, the word of God then shows the effect of that sin in man's relationship with others. The story of Cain and Abel shows us how sin affects our relationship with God and with those around us.

God's Response To Offerings (4:3-5a). The children of Adam and Eve pursued different vocations as adults. Cain became a farmer while Abel watched over flocks. At some

point, the family had begun to take a portion of their blessings to give to the Lord as an offering. The description of Cain's offering was that he brought "some" of the fruits of the soul. Abel, meanwhile, brought fat portions from "the firstborn of his flock."

It would be incorrect to evaluate these offerings in light of the sacrifices that would come later under the Mosaic law. God did not reject Cain's offering because it was not an animal sacrifice. The fruit of the land would be the expected offering of a farmer and would have been acceptable if brought in the right spirit. Apparently,



Bird

Cain did not give his best and he did not give out of sincere desire to please the Lord. Abel, on the other hand, believed in God enough to give the best he could offer. The writer of Hebrews tells us that it was this faith that made him pleasing in the eyes of God (Hebrews 11:4).

God's attitude remains unchanged today regarding our service to him. He still primarily concerns himself with the condition of our heart and not the type or worth of gift dedicated to him.

God's Warning To A Sinner (4:5b-7). Instead of being repentant, Cain became angry at God and jealous of his brother. God approached him with the gentle warning of a loving father. God reminded Cain he could change his attitude and bring an offering God would accept.

God also warned him that sin, left unchecked, would devour the one who entertained it. The imagery God uses is powerful - sin is like a wild animal crouching, waiting for the opportune time to attack. Like so many people today, Cain ignored God's warning.

Sin and Denial of Responsibility (4:8-9). Cain allowed anger and jealousy to master him and, as a result, he murdered his brother. When God questioned him about his actions, Cain's response was cold and calculated: he couldn't be expected to be responsible for his brother. Like his parents before him, Cain was not ready to take responsibility for his own actions in being displeasing to the Lord. As God had warned, sin had pounced completely upon Cain. Because of God's righteous judgement, the consequences of that sin were inevitable.

Inevitable Consequences Of Sin (4:10-16). Cain was forced to leave his home. The land which had fed him and provided for him would now be barren to him. Doomed to wander for the rest of his days, even in Cain's punishment we see evidence of the love and mercy of God.

When Cain protested he would be a target for every man, God placed a mark on him signifying his divine protection. What a beautiful image of the way God deals with us today! Even when we have sinned and turned from him, he still is there for us, reminding us He has not given up on us.

Like Cain and Abel, each of us lives in a sinful world. Likewise, we each have a choice - to live a life pleasing to God or to disobey Him and face the consequences. The choice is ours to make.

Bird is pastor, 15th Avenue Church, Meridian.

FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

How can we succeed?

Zechariah 4

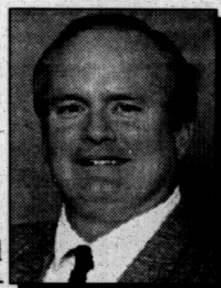
By Wayne VanHorn

Today's lesson focuses upon the fifth of Zechariah's eight night visions found in Zechariah 1-6. Zechariah was a contemporary of Haggai and was concerned with the restoration of the Post-exilic community and the rebuilding of the Temple.

Power (4:1-6). Zechariah's fifth vision was of a gold lampstand, topped by a bowl and flanked by two olive trees. The lampstand represents the community of believers entrusted to give God's light to the world. The reference to being aroused to attention in Zech. 4:1 underscores the importance of this particular

vision. The lampstand has three peculiar features not found in the Tabernacle lampstand.

First, the bowl of oil is on top of it, providing a gravity feed system of oil supply. Second, gold pipes or conduits run from the oil supply directly to each lamp. Finally, the lampstand has a direct and endless supply of oil from two olive trees. The prophet's inquiry in 4:4 indicates that he was ignorant of the meaning of the vision. The angel's response to his inquiry in 4:5 indicates that the meaning is not obscure and should have been grasped by the prophet. However, the full significance is stated in a terse and forceful way, "Not by might, nor



VanHorn

by power, but by my Spirit," says the Lord of Hosts" (4:6; NASB). The terms "might" and "power" are virtually synonymous. Taken together, they encompass the sum total of all human strength, ingenuity and ability. Simply put, God's work will not be accomplished by human efforts

no matter how noble. God's work can be accomplished only when God's Spirit is at work. Zerubbabel needed to hear this message in particular since he was the governor overseeing the important work of rebuilding the Temple. Thus, this "word of the Lord" was "to Zerubbabel" (4:6a).

Promise (4:7-10). God promised Zerubbabel that the Temple would be completed during his administration. The work would be consummated when Zerubbabel himself put the headstone in place. Literal

Hebrew reads, "Who (not 'what') are you, O great mountain?" The indication may be that Zerubbabel's chief obstacle in completing the Temple was not material but personal. God promised that the obstacles would be removed, signified here by saying, "You will become a plain" (4:7a). The shout, "Grace, grace to it!" refers to a prayer for divine favor on the Temple once completed (4:7b). Verses 8-10 contain a subsequent word that reinforces the same promise. The "day of small things" refers to the meticulous details of building and the obvious lack of grandeur of the second Temple (see Haggai 2:3 and Ezra 3:12). "To despise the day of small things" meant to fail to see the hand of God at work in the rebuilding process and to incite people to cease the project. In contrast, the Lord himself takes delight in even the smallest of details, signified by the "eyes of the Lord" being "glad" when

they see the plumbline in Zerubbabel's hand (4:10b).

Personnel (4:11-14). The Lord provides the personnel to accomplish his work. Zerubbabel returned to his earlier inquiry concerning the two olive trees, focusing more particularly on two branches. The angel identifies the branches, and by extension the trees, as the "two anointed ones," literally "sons of oil," signifying two men who had been anointed for particular tasks (4:14). In this case, the reference is to Zerubbabel, the civil leader, and to Joshua, the religious leader. They stand as servants to the side of the lampstand, enabling it to give continuous light. Jesus commanded believers to let their lights shine (Matt. 5:16). How can we succeed? We succeed by allowing the power of God's Spirit to flow through us. The Church becomes the lampstand of Zechariah's fifth vision!

VanHorn is pastor, First Church, Columbia.

LIFE AND WORK

One and only gospel

Acts 17:16-19, 22-28, 30-34

By Geneva England

If you've ever experienced temporary blindness, you remember grasping for sight, frightened that your lack of vision would paralyze your future. Often the Bible compares physical and spiritual blindness because the individual feels completely lost in both.

Today's flood of atheists, agnostics, materialists, and humanists behooves the Christian to learn enough about the gospel message to recognize perversions and look for opportunities to share the gospel to unbelievers. Paul saw the need; he seized the opportunity.

Look for Opportunities (17:16-19). Paul, Silas, and Timothy had preached in Berea

where a number of Jews and prominent Greeks believed in the name of Lord Jesus Christ. Some disgruntled Thessalonians soon came there stirring up trouble for the missionaries. The Bereans carried Paul to Athens for safety and left him there to wait for Silas and Timothy. While waiting, he toured Athens and became disturbed by the paganism. He immediately began preaching the good news about Jesus and his resurrection in both the synagogue and in the marketplace. This angered two prominent groups of philosophers: the Epicureans (pleasure-seeking atheists who refuted God as creator) and Stoics (panteists who "followed nature" as



England

a guide for their humane and moral actions). Paul penetrated the ranks of these learned men by appealing to their intellect.

Make a Connection (17:22-23). The Areopagus in Athens was the site for learned reasoning and debate among the Greek philosophers. Only the wisest men could withstand the intense questioning of the Greek philosophers. Even today, literature echoes the excellent advice of the Greeks. As good as their advice was, they lacked the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Paul, a scholar himself, used the Greek's craving for new ideas to introduce the living Savior. The Greeks, not wanting to anger any deity, had even erected an altar to "The Unknown God." To make a connection with them, Paul very courteously pointed out their open-minded and god-fearing nature in acknowledg-

ing the existence of an unknown deity.

Focus on Jesus (24-28, 30-31). Paul then grasped the opportunity to explain that without Christ, the living Savior, there is no life; without life there is no existence. Skillfully, Paul led his pagan audience to the Cross, proclaiming in Christ "we live, and move, and have our being" (v. 28). Also he demonstrated his knowledge of Greek poetry by quoting from Aratus: "For we are also his offspring." The Greek scholars took note of this so-called "babbler" (pretend teacher), realizing that he was neither a religious fanatic nor Jewish zealot.

Pointing to the unknown god, Paul declared the Eternal God as the one you "ignorantly worship," not knowing him as the Christ (v. 23). He gave three characteristics of the true God as opposed to their gods: first, God cannot be contained within buildings; second, he cannot be worshipped by things made with men's hands, such as stat-

ues, shrines, etc.; and third, he gave all life and all things and determined all times; therefore, he is God over all men, not a god of man's creation. In one breath, Paul dismissed all the false gods and their mythological powers.

Expect Mixed Results (17:32-34). Paul concluded that all mankind must repent of their sins and believe in Jesus Christ because he alone is the true Savior, having been raised from the dead. Many of the Greek intellectuals mocked this "resurrection idea." However, some wanted to learn more, and some even became followers of Paul's teachings.

Seeing spiritual blindness all around, Paul took advantage of his wait for Silas and Timothy by preaching and teaching in Athens, and God blessed his efforts with new converts. God does indeed work in wonderful and mysterious ways!

England is a member of First Church, Grenada.



Internet block helping to screen obscenity

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP) — A computer-wise Arkansan repulsed by obscene material available on the Internet has started a company to block such matter for its computer-user customers.

Neil Willis, a 26-year-old Air Force trained technician, founded Alphanet Internet Communications Inc. in 1995 as a web site design company. In December, Alphanet began providing protected access to the Internet and it already has gotten business from churches, Christian schools and colleges, Arkansas' Baptist hospital system and the largest bank in the state. Twenty percent of its business is from pastors and churches.

Last year, Willis and a friend were browsing the Internet and "we stumbled upon some pornography without even looking for it," he says.

Willis was designing home pages in his spare time. His full-

time job was as an information services manager for a large insurance firm. Willis had been praying for several weeks to be directed to the work the Lord wanted him to do.

"I went to my Source," says Willis, who named the company Alphanet because God is first in the business. "I said, 'Lord, you know my talents, what I'm able to do and what I'm not able to do. Just open up the door.'"

So Willis surveyed parents and asked if they would sign up with an Internet provider that would block access to information damaging to families and businesses.

"We got an overwhelming response," says Willis, a good-natured entrepreneur with a neatly trimmed black beard. "Almost a 100 percent response."

Almost like a fire wall in an automobile, Alphanet prevents pornography, violence, profanity, information on the use of illegal drugs and other inappropri-

ate material on the Internet from ever reaching a customer's computer. Alphanet owns the rights in Arkansas to a filtering device that screens the material.

Alphanet pays about 20 employees working for a management company to find unwanted information on the Internet and update its filter on a daily basis.

"This is the most comprehensive filtering system in the

nation right now," says Willis, an Assemblies of God layman who has a degree in microelectronics from the University of South Carolina.

Willis' mission for Alphanet is to "increase the responsible user base over the Internet and to ultimately decrease the demand for material that is detrimental to both the family and to the business community."



PUCKER UP — Grandview Church secretary Ruby Backstrom gets ready to "kiss a goat" as part of the VBS promotion for missions. Cowboys and cowgirls brought pennies for missions. The boys brought the most, so Mrs. Backstrom had to kiss the goat, much to the relief of pastor Wade Chappell. Over \$260 was raised — all in pennies! Grandview Church is located at 900 S. Pearson Road in Pearl.

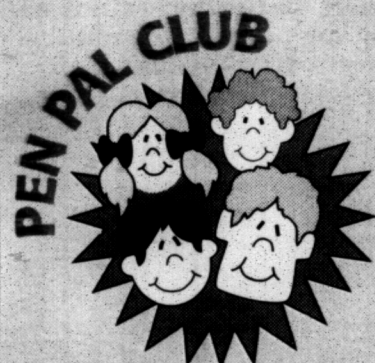


See if you can "catch" all the fish whose letters you see on the boat. color them. Now look carefully at the letters you see on the plain fish, and you will be able to read a promise that Jesus made to Peter and Andrew.

Write the promise here:

_____ (Matthew 4:19)

Source: **The Big Book of Bible Games and Puzzles** by Joy MacKenzie and Shirley Blecksoe (Zondervan, 1982), available at your local bookstore or by calling 800-727-3480.



Dear Pen Pal Club,

Hi! My name is Jessica McQuaig. I go to Magnolia School in Meridian. I am in the 6th grade and I am 11 years old. I attend Northcrest Baptist Church. I am going to play the

flute in the band this year. I love music, computers, and swimming. I have four cats. Their names are: Maddie, Piedmont, Cookie, and Precious.

Please write to:
3418 40th Avenue
Meridian, MS 39307

Dear Pen Pal Club,

Hi my name is Josh Field. I go to Sumrall High School. I'm 16 years old and in the 11th grade. I like to fix cars, drive cars, play sports with friends, and meeting new people. I go to church at Oloh Baptist Church. I also attend Bible study at my school during break. I work at

McDonalds right now, but that's beside the point.

Please write to:
25 Regan Rd.
Sumrall, MS 39482

Dear Pen Pal Club,

My name is Ben Field. I go to Sumrall Jr. High School. I live in Oloh, Miss. My hobbies are riding bikes and playing soccer. I love soccer better than any sport. I have at my house 3 Great Danes. My family breeds them. I am 14 if you want to know. I'll turn 15 on Feb 22. I would love it if you would write to me.

Please write to:
25 Regan Rd.
Sumrall, MS 39482



HANDS-ON — The first and second grade children at Central Church, Brookhaven have learned missions through a hands-on approach. The lesson was on missions and a member of the church who is a Gideon spoke to the children about their ministry. This sparked an interest regarding the person Gideon and the story was told the next week. The children then made their very own "Gideon Banks." The banks were taken home and the children collected money. Some even gave their allowance so that the money could be used collectively to buy Bibles for the Gideon ministry. Children have a hard time understanding the concept of foreign countries and the missions there. These children now have a very good understanding of giving to missions so others can receive Bibles because they applied what they learned and will always remember collecting \$115.80 for 23 Bibles. (BR special photo)

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
copyright 1997

U HPR AS KURO AIR
GODS EA RAFCURM: PG
U COPT, U VXEMO: PRE
KB VXEMKORF UG VXGF;
WOHPXGO U GOON RAF
KURO AIR IUDD, WXF
FCO IUDD AS FCO SPF-
COT ICUHC CPFC GORF
KO.

VACR SUJO: FCUTFB

Clue: B equals Y

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: First John Four One.